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## 2007 Founders Day

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

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# FOUNDERS' DAY

*2007*

ASSEMBLY

JANUARY 26, 2007  
ROSE K. GINSBURG AMPHITHEATER  
11:00 A.M.

# OUR FOUNDERS

The annual observance of Founders' Day honors the founders of Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine:

Oscar John Snyder, DO, and  
Mason Wiley Pressly, DO.

Dr. Snyder, who "put the cause of osteopathic medicine above personal considerations," was the College's first president.

He remained with PCOM for 42 years as an adviser and member of the Board of Trustees.

Dr. Snyder was instrumental in obtaining the Commonwealth's legal recognition of the College and the osteopathic profession through establishing the high standards of osteopathic medical education.

Dr. Pressly, a Presbyterian minister and well-known orator, was PCOM's first teacher. He remained on the faculty until 1904, teaching physiology, the philosophy and principles of osteopathy, hygiene and dietetics. He was PCOM's first secretary and treasurer, and the *de facto* dean until 1902.

Dr. Pressly founded *The Philadelphia Journal of Osteopathy* to promote osteopathic medicine in Philadelphia and wrote the American Osteopathic Association's first constitution.

# PROGRAM

## **Introductions**

Kenneth J. Veit, DO '76, MBA  
*Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean*

## **Invocation**

John W. Becher, DO '70  
*Alumni Association President*

## **The Pledge of Allegiance**

Scott Feitell (DO '09)  
*Student Government Association President*

## **PCOM A Cappella**

## **Welcome**

Matthew Schure, PhD  
*President and Chief Executive Officer*

## **Greetings from Class Representatives**

## **Introduction of the Mason W. Pressly Memorial Medal Recipient**

Dr. Veit and Mr. Feitell

## **Address by the Mason W. Pressly Memorial Medal Recipient**

Jessica Yahnert Masser (DO '07)

## **Introduction of the O.J. Snyder Memorial Medal Recipient**

Dr. Schure

## **Address by the O.J. Snyder Memorial Medal Recipient**

John Simelaro, DO '71, FACOI, FCCP

## **Benediction**

Robert G. Cuzzolino, EdD  
*Vice President for Graduate Programs and Academic Planning*





## O.J. SNYDER MEMORIAL MEDAL RECIPIENT

### JOHN SIMELARO, DO '71, FACOI, FCCP

When John P. Simelaro, DO '71, FACOI, FCCP, walks into the classroom at PCOM, you never know what to expect. He is both a showman and a teacher who keeps his students entertained while teaching them valuable lessons about the art and science of medicine. This down-to-earth, humorous and compassionate physician is the 2007 O.J. Snyder Memorial Medal recipient.

Surprisingly, Dr. Simelaro never intended to be a teacher. It was during his medical education at PCOM that he discovered a passion for teaching as well as practicing medicine. And so a career in academic medicine was born that has spanned more than three decades and touched the lives of virtually every student who has attended PCOM during his tenure.

His interest in medicine began when he developed severe asthma as a young child. "I missed half my childhood because of asthma," recalls Dr. Simelaro, who is professor and chairman of internal medicine, program director for internal medicine residency and past chairman, division of pulmonary medicine. He was inspired to become an osteopathic physician by his own doctor, Salvatore Giamporcaro, DO '47.

During his internship year at PCOM, his talent for teaching caught the attention of the late Thomas M. Rowland, Jr., PCOM's fourth president, who later recruited him for a full-time teaching position in the department of internal medicine. "Tom recognized John's flair for teaching," says Pat A. Lannutti, DO '71, professor and co-vice chair of internal medicine, and Dr. Simelaro's long-time friend and practice partner. "John is beloved by the students because he relates well to young people and he knows how to motivate them."

"I love taking kids and making doctors out of them. It thrills me," says Dr. Simelaro, a ten-time winner of the student-awarded PCOM Teacher of the Year Award as well as a recipient of the Lindback Foundation Award for Distinguished Teaching. His students are captivated by his unbridled enthusiasm and entertaining style of lecturing. "When I teach, I put on a show," he says. "Teaching and entertaining are really the same thing. You have to spice it up and bring medicine to life to make it memorable."

Among his many accomplishments, Dr. Simelaro takes pride in having established the College's division of pulmonary medicine and in his clinical

research in pulmonary pharmaceuticals, particularly drugs to treat asthma. Through his research, he has discovered that asthma exists in two forms—extrinsic and intrinsic. "The intrinsic form leads to airways remodeling in which the airways take on the form of chronic bronchitis," he explains. "Every asthma attack puts you deeper into that remodeling. This type of asthma is not reversible, so it's important to stop the attacks at all costs."

For the past few years, Dr. Simelaro has been involved in clinical research for a new asthma medication designed to do just that. "We're one of 400 centers nationwide involved in following an FDA-approved medication, omalizumab, and we have one of the highest volumes of patients in the country," he relates. "The benefits to our patients have been profound."

Throughout his career, Dr. Simelaro has stayed on the cutting edge of medicine through his involvement in many professional organizations. A fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Internists, he served on that organization's board of directors for 12 years. He is also a fellow of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, the American College of Chest Physicians, and the American College of Angiology, and a member of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.

Dr. Simelaro is intensely proud of his family. His wife, Felice, holds a master of liberal arts degree and is vice principal of institutional advancement at Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School. They had three daughters. Their first, Gina, died at age three-and-a-half from leukemia; a PCOM scholarship was later established in her name. Their other daughters are Annette, who is an attorney in Atlanta, and Christina, an actress.

He also cares deeply about his students who he often refers to as "the kids." "I love being down in the trenches with them," he says. The most important lessons he wants them to learn are loyalty, teamwork and compassion. "Medicine is not an individual sport," he advises. "You must work as a team with your fellow doctors and be totally committed to your patients 24/7. Have compassion for them and treat them all like family. Remember your roots as osteopathic physicians. We are people doctors, not disease doctors."

"The greatest gifts my former students could give me are these," Dr. Simelaro concludes. "First, if you value the lessons I taught you, the greatest way to show your appreciation is by making a contribution to PCOM to help continue the proud tradition of teaching that produces such exceptional osteopathic physicians. Second, strive to be a better doctor than I am because then I will have reached my goal of leaving the medical profession better than I found it."



## JOHN SIMELARO, DO '71

### *Selected Curriculum Vitae*

- Established the College's Division of Pulmonary Medicine in 1976, and has served as a member of the faculty for more than 30 years, acting as associate professor, professor, and chair of the Department of Internal Medicine, as well as director of the Department of Internal Medicine Residency Program.
- The recipient of clinical research and fellowship grants from the American Lung Association and various pharmaceutical companies including GlaxoSmithKline, Merck, Novartis, Pfizer and Roerig. Studies have focused on the treatment of pneumonia, asthma, bronchitis and upper- and lower-respiratory tract infections.
- Service on behalf of the American College of Angiology, the American College of Chest Physicians, the American College of Osteopathic Internists, the Bureau of Scientific Development Committee on Promotion of Research, the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Osteopathic Medical Center of Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association and Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine.
- Honors include the student-awarded PCOM Teacher of the Year Award (10 times) and the Lindback Foundation Award for Distinguished Teaching (1981).



## MASON W. PRESSLY MEMORIAL MEDAL RECIPIENT JESSICA YAHNERT MASSER (DO '07)

"I was born to be an osteopathic physician," says Jessica Yahnert Masser (DO '07). This statement embodies the love and enthusiasm that this year's Mason W. Pressly Memorial Medal recipient has for the osteopathic tradition. "Ever since I was five years old, I've wanted to be the kind of doctor who really cares about their patients and puts their whole heart into making them better," says Mrs. Masser.

Now finishing her final year of an osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM) fellowship, she has discovered that, in addition to becoming an osteopathic physician, she wants to help teach the next generation. Eventually, she may return to her roots in an underserved area of western Pennsylvania where she can work with residents, helping them to hone and maintain their OMM skills. She plans to complete a residency in family medicine plus one year in Neuromuscular Medicine (NMM). This will enable her to be double board certified with the emphasis of her practice on OMM.

"I find it amazing to be able to use your hands to help people feel so much better," says Mrs. Masser, who also received the Louisa B. Smith, DO Memorial Scholarship awarded each year to a female student who shows outstanding capability and strong motivation in osteopathic philosophy. "With OMM, I can help people that no one else has been able to help."

During her fellowship, Mrs. Masser has been involved in a number of OMM research studies. Last year, she won a research fellowship from the American Osteopathic Association for a study she designed for fibromyalgia patients. She would like to continue that research and begin to look at what OMM can do to help people with other chronic diseases. "This research will help to provide an anatomic and physiologic basis for why OMM is beneficial," explains Mrs. Masser, who also serves as PCOM's national representative for the National Undergraduate Fellowship Association.

Mrs. Masser's enthusiastic nature carries over into the extracurricular arena as well. During her freshman year, she founded PCOM's first sorority, Kappa Sigma Phi Women's Osteopathic Society, which now has over 300 members dedicated to community service as well as supporting PCOM and each other.

Mrs. Masser is still awed at winning the Mason Pressly award. "So many deserving students do so much every day, and I was just honored to be considered in their league," she says. "My hope is that I leave things a little better than the way I found them, and that my fellow students will always take pride in PCOM and in being osteopathic physicians."

## MASON W. PRESSLY MEMORIAL MEDAL

*The Mason W. Pressly Memorial Medal is presented by PCOM to the student who is recognized by students, faculty and the administration as "Student DO of the Year," an award that is part of an annual tradition at each osteopathic medical school nationwide.*

*The recipient is honored for outstanding achievement and service to the College, the community and the osteopathic profession and is selected by representatives of the overall College community.*

- |                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1999 Dana Hamilton, DO '99        | 2004 Stacey Franz, DO '04       |
| 2000 Alison Leff, DO '00          | 2005 Nicholas Bower, DO '05     |
| 2001 Constance Gasda, DO '01      | 2006 Gregory A. Skochko, DO '06 |
| 2002 Edward J. Armbruster, DO '02 | 2007 Jessica Masser (DO '07)    |
| 2003 Joshua M. Baron, DO '03      |                                 |

## O. J. SNYDER MEMORIAL MEDAL

*The O.J. Snyder Memorial Medal, presented in memory of the co-founder of Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, is the College's highest award to recognize leadership and service to the osteopathic profession and to the College.*

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1953 David S. B. Pennock, MD, DO*   | 1983 George H. Guest, DO '36*                           |
| 1954 Margaret H. Jones, DO*         | 1984 Thomas M. Rowland, Jr.,<br>LLD (Hon.), DSc (Hon.)* |
| 1955 Chester D. Swope, DO*          | 1985 Galen S. Young, Sr., DO '35*                       |
| 1956 Russell C. McCaughan, DO*      | 1986 David Heilig, DO '44*                              |
| 1958 Phil R. Russell, DO*           | 1987 W. Kenneth Riland, DO '36*                         |
| 1959 Ira W. Drew, DO '11*           | 1988 Richard S. Koch, DO '38                            |
| 1960 C. Paul Snyder, DO '10*        | 1989 Ruth E. Purdy, DO '50                              |
| 1961 James M. Eaton, DO '28*        | 1990 Morton E. Terry, DO '45*                           |
| 1962 J. Ernest Leuzinger, DO '24*   | 1991 Arnold Gerber, DO '40*                             |
| 1963 H. Walter Evans, DO '17*       | 1992 Emanuel Fliegelman, DO '42*                        |
| 1964 Paul T. Lloyd, DO '23*         | 1993 Robert L. Meals, DO '56*                           |
| 1966 Angus G. Cathie, DO '31*       | 1994 Fairman L. Denlinger, DO '53*                      |
| 1967 Carlton Street, DO '24*        | 1995 Lester Eisenberg, DO '38*                          |
| 1968 Edwin H. Cressman, DO '26*     | 1996 Albert F. D'Alonzo, DO '56*                        |
| 1969 Edgar O. Holden, DO '22*       | 1997 Frieda O. Vickers, DO '39*                         |
| 1970 Frederic H. Barth, LLD (Hon.)* | 1998 Robert M. Fogel, DO '58                            |
| 1971 Joseph F. Py, DO '26*          | 1999 Nicholas C. Pedano, DO '61                         |
| 1972 George W. Northup, DO '39*     | 2000 Leonard H. Finkelstein, DO '59                     |
| 1973 William F. Daiber, DO '28*     | 2001 Ronald R. Blanck, DO '67                           |
| 1974 Herman Kohn, DO '27*           | 2002 Joseph M. Pelletiere, Jr., DO '48*                 |
| 1975 William S. Spaeth, DO '25*     | 2003 Leonard W. Johnson, DO '64                         |
| 1976 Mortimer J. Sullivan, DO '21*  | 2004 Herbert Lotman, LLD (Hon.)                         |
| 1977 A. Aline Swift, DO '34*        | 2005 Carol A. Fox, MM                                   |
| 1978 Foster C. True, DO '22*        | 2006 Robert W. England, DO '56                          |
| 1979 Frank E. Gruber, DO '26*       | 2007 John Simelaro, DO '71                              |
| 1980 Leo C. Wagner, DO '26*         |   |
| 1981 R. MacFarlane Tilley, DO '23*  |   |
| 1982 M. Carman Pettapiece, DO '32*  |   |

Deceased\*

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